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Summary record of the 19th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 14 December 2012, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Berger ..... (Germany)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Kelapile

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Organization of work

Election of officers

1. **The Chair** informed the Committee that Mr. Costa Vargas (Brazil) had indicated his intention to resign from the office of Vice-Chair of the Committee with effect from 31 December 2012. Thus, in accordance with rule 105 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Committee was invited to elect a new Vice-Chair from the Latin American and Caribbean States. Those States had endorsed the nomination of Ms. Juliana Gaspar Ruas (Brazil) to fill the unexpired portion of Mr. Costa Vargas's term.

2. *Ms. Ruas (Brazil) was elected Vice-Chair of the Committee by acclamation for the period from 1 January 2013 to the end of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly.*

Agenda item 130: Programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013 (*continued*)

Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/67/346 and Add.1-7 and A/67/604 and Add.1 and 2)

3. **Ms. Casar** (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/67/346 and Add.1-7), said that, as in the past, the budget proposals for special political missions for 2013 had been grouped into three thematic clusters (cluster I: special and personal envoys, special advisers and special representatives of the Secretary-General (A/67/346/Add.1 and Add.6); cluster II: sanctions monitoring teams, groups and panels (A/67/346/Add.2); and cluster III: United Nations offices, peacebuilding support offices, integrated offices and commissions (A/67/346/Add.3 and Add.7)), while the proposals for larger missions had been presented separately (A/67/346/Add.4 and Add.5).

4. The total requirements for the 33 missions for 2013 amounted to $567,000,000 (net of staff assessment), of which $64,500,000 related to the four new missions created in the latter part of 2011 and 2012. Taking into account the estimated level of expenditure for 2012, the additional requirements for those missions amounted to $568,100,000, of which $442,779,600 was proposed to be charged against the unallocated balance in the provision for special political missions for 2012-2013. The General Assembly was requested to appropriate the remaining requirements, amounting to $125,295,600.

5. The action required of the General Assembly was set out in chapter III of the report (A/67/346).

6. **Mr. Kelapile** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related reports of the Advisory Committee (A/67/604 and Add.1 and 2), said that an overview of the proposed resource requirements for the biennium 2012-2013 was contained in chapter II of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/67/604). The Advisory Committee noted the measures taken to reduce resource requirements for 2013. While it welcomed the steps taken to streamline activities and achieve efficiencies, it was of the view that the Secretary-General's report lacked clarity as to the extent to which the reductions had been made possible through better planning and budget management, including the abolition of long-vacant posts, or through sustainable efficiency gains. Reductions and measures aimed at achieving efficiencies should be implemented in a manner that would not jeopardize the fulfilment of mandated activities or compromise the safety and security of mission personnel and premises.

7. Chapter III of the Advisory Committee's report (A/67/604) contained general observations and recommendations on cross-cutting issues applicable to all special political missions. Specific recommendations on resource requirements for the three thematic clusters, as well as the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), were contained in chapter IV of the report. With regard to cluster I, the Advisory Committee noted that the estimated resources proposed for 2013 reflected an increase of some $4 million over the appropriation for 2012, owing primarily to the inclusion of the provision for the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen, the initial requirements of which had been funded through the unforeseen and extraordinary expenditures mechanism available to the Secretary-General. The Advisory Committee recommended approval of the Secretary-General's staffing proposals, with the exception of the proposal for a new General

Service position in the New York office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen. It also recommended a 10-per-cent reduction in the proposed official travel requirement for the Office of the Special Adviser. With respect to cluster II, the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the Secretary-General's proposed staffing changes.

8. Under cluster III, an increase of $3.39 million in the provision for 2013 compared to the approved budget for 2012 was due mainly to the additional staffing requirements for the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), which were partially offset by staffing reductions for the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) and the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB), as well as reduced requirements for the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS). With a few exceptions, the Advisory Committee had no objection to the Secretary-General's staffing proposals; however, the standard post classification criteria should be applied uniformly across all missions.

9. The Advisory Committee also recommended approval of the Secretary-General's proposals for UNAMA, although efforts should have been made to present a more transparent and better organized proposal and a more complete justification for the establishment of a Joint Operations Centre. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended that the Secretary-General should be requested to provide details on the organizational structure, reporting lines, functions, staffing, operating costs and expected benefits of the Centre and an assessment of its first year of operation in his next report. With regard to the closure of nine UNAMA provincial offices, the Advisory Committee was not convinced that a realistic assessment of the security situation had been carried out or that lessons learned from prior experience had been properly applied before it had been decided to expand the mission's presence and implement security upgrades to mission premises. It therefore recommended that the Secretary-General should be requested to ensure that future decisions to expand field presences should be properly informed by a realistic security assessment.

10. For UNAMI, the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the Secretary-General's proposals. The Advisory Committee noted the security improvements which had allowed the return of national staff based in Amman and the closure of that office, but also stressed the need for close supervision and oversight of the project to renovate the integrated headquarters compound in Baghdad. While it did not object to the Secretary-General's proposal to expand the Kuwait Joint Support Office, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Secretary-General should be requested to provide further information in his next report on the organizational structure, functions, reporting lines, staffing and activities of that Office, and that a cost-benefit analysis should be conducted.

11. With regard to the Office of the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States for Syria, which was in the process of transferring its headquarters from Geneva to Cairo and of establishing a presence in Damascus, the Advisory Committee's report (A/67/604/Add.1) recommended approval of the request for resources, with the exception of the proposal to create two General Service positions. Given the evolving situation on the ground, the mission should monitor overall staffing levels and keep the deployment to different locations under close review.

12. Lastly, the Advisory Committee's report on the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (A/67/604/Add.2) recommended approval of the Secretary-General's request to reclassify the position of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau, in recognition of the unique circumstances in that country and the need for a high-profile personality at the rank of a former Head of State or equivalent to help resolve the political stalemate.

13. **Mr. dos Santos** (Brazil) said that the renewed commitment to conflict prevention had given special political missions greater prominence within the United Nations peace and security architecture. In that connection, the Committee's main concern should be to ensure that every mission had the necessary resources to fulfil its mandate. A more comprehensive approach should be adopted to ensure that the financial and administrative arrangements of the special political missions reflected their growing importance and allowed them to perform efficiently. However, their current backstopping and financial arrangements, which were bound by the structure of the regular budget, did not adequately reflect the special and volatile nature of complex mandates related to peace and security. As a result, the approved budgets rarely met the missions' needs for the entire biennium and

often required revised appropriations. Such a piecemeal approach did nothing to improve transparency or efficiency, but rather created unnecessary difficulties for the programme and budget planning processes and placed an additional burden on the regular budget.

14. In addition to solving those technical issues, the General Assembly should review the scale of assessments applicable to special political missions, particularly as it had already recognized that the special responsibilities of the permanent members of the Security Council for the maintenance of peace and security should be reflected in that scale of assessments. Given the importance of the special political missions, the Committee should take a decision on the matter at the current session.

15. **Mr. Onuma** (Japan) said that his delegation supported the mandates of all the special political missions and welcomed the Secretary-General's budget estimates in respect of those missions for 2013, which represented a decrease of some $76 million compared to the approved budget for 2012. However, the total proposed budget for the special political missions for 2012 and 2013 together exceeded the amount approved for the biennium by about $113 million; it was therefore necessary to seek further efficiency in resource utilization.

16. The Advisory Committee's recommendations, which reflected careful and balanced scrutiny of the proposed budget, taking into account the mandate of each mission, would provide a good starting point for the Fifth Committee's deliberations. Lastly, he underscored the importance of the activities of the sanctions monitoring panels, which his delegation would continue to support in order to allow them to implement their Security Council mandates.

17. **Ms. Morgan** (Mexico) said that the budget for special political missions had increased by 1,256 per cent over the last decade and currently represented 24 per cent of the budgetary resources for the biennium 2012-2013. As the United Nations budget had remained more or less constant for the last five years and no other category of activities had grown at a comparable rate, it was safe to assume that special political missions were the main driver of the increase in the regular budget. While her delegation strongly supported activities in the field to promote international peace and security, the distortions created by the current funding and backstopping arrangements for special political missions, particularly those in cluster III, must be addressed.

18. The disproportionate growth in special political missions, at the expense of other United Nations activities, undermined efforts to find efficiencies and achieve savings. The existing arrangements did not give a clear indication of which budget lines were being used to support special political missions, contrary to the values of transparency and accountability, and affected Member States' ability to plan their contributions. Because new resources of $113 million were needed for special political missions in 2013, despite the Secretariat's considerable efforts to find savings within UNAMA and UNAMI, the regular budget had been reduced by 1.5 per cent, while the budget for special political missions had increased by almost 3 per cent. In that connection, collaboration among all missions with a field presence should be given priority, as it would generate economies of scale while promoting better mandate delivery. Her delegation shared the Advisory Committee's view that special political missions should take advantage of the lessons learned from peacekeeping operations in specific areas such as fuel management and reporting on the impact of efficiency measures and on mandate delivery.

19. The introduction of the special political mission budgets shortly before the end of the main part of the General Assembly session made it difficult for the Fifth Committee to discharge its supervisory responsibilities adequately. Her delegation was considering the possibility of proposing that those budgets should be considered together with the peacekeeping budgets during the second part of the resumed session, starting in the sixty-eighth session of the Assembly.

20. The measures proposed by the Advisory Committee, in particular its recommendations that special political missions should have access to the same resources as peacekeeping operations and should have a separate account on the same budget cycle as peacekeeping operations, would resolve many of the problems identified and should therefore be endorsed by the Fifth Committee. Moreover, the enormous increase in the cost of special political missions represented a transfer of the financial burden of United Nations activities for the maintenance of international peace and security to the regular budget. As the

majority of the special political missions had been established by the Security Council, the permanent members of the Council should assume their special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. However, in order to facilitate a consensus, her delegation would back the proposal, put forward by the Latin American and Caribbean States, to defer consideration of the scale of assessments applicable to special political missions, on the understanding that the question could not be avoided.

21. **Ms. Goicochea** (Cuba) said that it was regrettable that such an important question had not been taken up until the end of the main part of the General Assembly session. She concurred with the observations made by the representatives of Brazil and Mexico regarding the constant growth of the budget for special political missions. It made no sense to fund those missions under the regular budget, with all Member States bearing equal responsibility for the cost; rather, they should be financed according to the same scale of assessments as peacekeeping operations, whereby the contributions of the permanent members of the Security Council reflected their special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Her delegation endorsed the proposal made by the Latin American and Caribbean States for a special account to be established to finance special political missions, a measure that would provide greater transparency, efficiency and oversight of the budget management of those missions. A decision on the matter should be taken at the earliest opportunity.

22. Her delegation remained concerned that, in some cases, special political missions had no specific mandate but were established through an exchange of letters between the Secretary-General and the Security Council. Where they dealt with issues that were not covered by an explicit mandate from the Assembly, as was the case of the so-called responsibility to protect assigned to the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, their establishment constituted a breach of the Assembly's prerogatives. Similarly, her delegation wondered whether the delay in the issuance and consideration of the budget estimates was a sign of the Secretariat's disregard of the Member States' requests for the early submission of those documents, the result of inefficiencies within the Organization or a deliberate attempt to prevent Member States from analysing the budget requests thoroughly, a tactic that would serve the interests of those countries that used the United Nations to further their military ambitions and impose interventionist doctrines.

23. With respect to the resources for the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, she welcomed their inclusion in the report of the Secretary-General containing the estimates in respect of cluster I (A/67/346/Add.1) and reiterated her delegation's support for the functions performed by the Special Adviser under his mandate, which derived solely from intergovernmental decisions. The inclusion of the so-called responsibility to protect, which had no basis in General Assembly resolutions, reflected a lack of respect for Member States' decision-making.

24. The report lacked transparency and deliberately mingled proposals on the mandate and activities of the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect with those of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide; she requested a breakdown of the human and financial resources requested for each mandate holder.

Safety and security (A/67/526, A/67/539 and A/67/624)

25. **Mr. Starr** (Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security), introducing the comprehensive report of the Secretary-General on the Department of Safety and Security (A/67/526), which outlined the Department's strategic vision, mission and objectives, said that, since 2007, the Department had made significant strides in policy, operational and oversight support for the United Nations security management system, taking into account the evolving global security environment. As the number of countries presenting major security challenges was greater than it had been five years earlier, the Department had put in place a more robust and dynamic security and risk management architecture. Given that host Governments had the primary responsibility for the safety and security of United Nations personnel, assets and premises, the Department had engaged more actively with them on all aspects of security management, including by sharing security-related tools used by the security management system.

26. In the current financial climate, the Department had an obligation to maximize the use of its existing resources; it therefore reviewed its security deployments continuously and sought to use the most cost-effective means to recruit, select, train and deploy

security personnel. The greater risks faced by United Nations personnel in the course of implementing programmes and activities called for better information tools, better analysis of threats and better utilization of resources in order to minimize those risks.

27. Turning to the report on the use of private security (A/67/539), he noted that the United Nations had long used private security companies, mostly involving unarmed local personnel, for property protection and access control. Following a review of the existing guidance on the use of such companies, the Department had led a multi-agency effort, in tandem with the Inter-Agency Security Management Network, to produce a policy, guidelines and a model contract on the use of armed private security companies. Those documents, the result of regular and close collaboration within the Secretariat and throughout the United Nations system, had been approved by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) and established the highest standards of due diligence with respect to the use of private security companies.

28. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/67/624), said that the cost-sharing arrangements that supplemented the regular-budget financing of the activities of the Department of Safety and Security were critical for ensuring that all the organizations covered by the security management system shared ownership of and accountability for that system. The Advisory Committee was of the view that the Department should critically review and assess its available resources against its current operational needs and priorities and that the presentation of proposals for the gross budget for jointly financed activities could benefit from greater transparency and coherence. In that connection, it recommended that the Fifth Committee should request the Secretary-General to ensure that subsequent budget proposals disclosed the functions and related requirements that were to be met through the gross budget for jointly financed activities, as well as those of participating organizations that were expected to complement the Department's activities in the field.

29. While the Advisory Committee commended the Department of Safety and Security for the progress it had made in strengthening the security management system in a challenging security environment, and recognized the measures taken to decentralize decision-making in security matters and the increased use of security officers with regional responsibility, the Department should ensure full accountability for compliance with security policies and guidelines throughout the United Nations system and should monitor managerial performance through the Inter-Agency Security Management Network.

30. Further to the development of a common policy on relations with the host country on security issues for the United Nations security management system, the Department of Safety and Security should, in accordance with paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 65/259, continue to strengthen its cooperation with host Governments to ensure the safety and security of United Nations personnel, premises and assets. With regard to the report on the use of private security (A/67/539), the Advisory Committee noted that, while the United Nations played a substantive role in the regulation and monitoring of armed private security companies, the scope of the report was limited to the discussion of the United Nations as a client of armed private security companies in its operations at Headquarters and in field locations. Moreover, the Advisory Committee was of the view that the policy and guidelines governing the use of armed private security companies, which had been approved by CEB in November 2012, should also be considered by the relevant committees of the General Assembly.

31. **Mr. Mihoubi** (Algeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that it was critical to take a comprehensive and integrated approach to the issue of safety and security. While the Secretary-General's reports provided important information on a number of key areas, they still did not meet the General Assembly's request for a comprehensive safety and security policy framework.

32. As the General Assembly had underscored in its relevant resolutions, the primary responsibility for the safety and security of United Nations staff and premises rested with the host countries; therefore, United Nations safety and security provisions could not work in isolation or without a process of due consultation with Member States. In that connection, the security level system should provide for close coordination and collaboration with host countries, and the new common policy on relations with the host country on security issues for the United Nations security management system should take into account

the relevant host country agreements. The Organization must establish clear criteria for determining security needs, evaluating threats and assessing risks so that the Department of Safety and Security would be able to respond to any emergency.

33. In the implementation of the new policies, tools and guidelines to identify and assess threats and risk, it should be borne in mind that the level of risk and the nature of security threats varied from one place to another and that United Nations activities had very different mandates. It was necessary to implement mandated programmes and services effectively while ensuring the safety and security of United Nations personnel, premises and assets. In that connection, additional information was needed on the phases, benchmarks and timelines of the programme criticality framework and on the lines of accountability and responsibility and the chain of command for all those involved in security in the field and at duty stations.

34. With regard to the use of private security, it was important to ensure effective regulation, monitoring, management and oversight of the Organization's use of private security, which should be used only as a last resort and in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, international law and international human rights standards. The Secretary-General should present a comprehensive policy on the use of private security for consideration by the relevant committees of the General Assembly and should seek legislative approval of that policy.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.